

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY.

The concept of sex education and its introduction in junior secondary schools has witnessed much controversies and misconception by many teachers, parents, the society and students. The concept of sex education which is sometimes called sexuality education or sex and relationship education attracts a plethora of definitions from different people. According to Frimpong (2010), sex education is “the systematic attempt to promote the healthy awareness in the individual on matters of his/her sexual development, functioning, behavior and attitudes through direct teaching”.

Similarly, the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) in Njoku (2008), sees sex education as “a planned process of education that fosters the acquisition of factual information, the formation of positive attitudes, beliefs and values as well as the development of skills to cope with the biological, psychological, socio-cultural, and spiritual aspects of human sexuality’. From these definitions, it can be deduced that sex education is a deliberate, planned and organized learning experience in the aspect of human sexuality which is intended to equip young people with the requisite skills and adequate knowledge which will enable them to develop positive attitude on sex related issues as well as to take rational decisions in line with societal expectations. It is important to note that sex education was not just incorporated into social studies for knowledge acquisition but to help young people develop attitudes, values, goals and practices that are based on sound knowledge which will enable them to express their sexual and mating impulses in a manner that is socially and ethically acceptable as well as personally satisfying (Abdu 2006 and Okafor in Bozimo and Ikwumelu, 1999). The concept of sex education in Nigerian schools is not a new concept in Nigeria. Adepoju (2005) and Abdu (2006) postulated that traditional form of sex education and family life education has been in existence where kinship systems, age grade and coming – of – age ceremonies or initiation ceremonies where the youths were tutored about manhood and womanhood. It was purely biological and cultural, while various methods of contraceptives were just kept at the domain of married people and kept secret. Many young people were kept in the dark as they were not opportuned to be properly educated on family life and sex education because their training was on “dos and don'ts”.

Traditionally, sex education was to be given to every child and adolescents by his/her immediate family but these practice has been eroded by the influence of modernization, western civilization, and collapsing family life; thereby leaving the young ones at the mercy of the wider society and other socializing agents who may not give accurate information that can assist the young ones in their transition to adulthood. This vacuum in the life of adolescents is what the school needed to the fill through the teaching of sex education in social students. The term sex goes beyond the realm of sex organs, instructions and act of sex organs as individuals are made to believe to make a breakthrough in the life of human relation among and between sex partners. Sex education is the instruction about sex and human sexuality. Sex is an important effect on the human life of an individual and almost everyone in the society including children wants to know about it. Traditionally, children are not supposed to receive information about sex at all. They many a time, learn about sex through their friends, books, television, pornographic films either from the magazines or internets and sex movies. Correct and factual information should be given to teenagers about the sudden development in their bodies. During this period, the girls develop breast, menstruation starts, pelvic borne broadens these starts at the age of eleven to twelve years and in the boys between fourteen to fifteen years.

The sexual organs mature the widening of the chest and enlargement of the larynx which causes breaking of the voice.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

Ignorance of sex and its associated problems is prevalent in and among secondary school students. The life of students are shattered with the passing of incorrect information among themselves, they get misled by others. Today, the problems resulting from the lack of sex education to our youth are numerous. They are unwanted pregnancies, increase abortion, high incidence of sexually transmitted diseases and high rates of sexual promiscuity. All these have led to inability to concentrate, poor school performance, deterioration of mental health of students, high rate of school drop outs, increase in illiteracy and over population. Consequently, the educational opportunity of Nigeria youth is greatly affected and this poses a great loss to the society. Religious bodies view sex education as premature, dangerous and likely to lead to sexual promiscuity. To behavioural scientists, the introduction of sex education is proper. However, despite the increasing sexual problems, parents and schools are still not providing teenagers with proper knowledge of sex. Teachers need to understand that it is essential to educate their students about sex.

1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY.

The main objective of the study is the perception of secondary school students on sex education.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is sex education?
2. What are the effects of sex education on secondary school students?
3. What is the importance of sex education?
4. What is the role of secondary school teachers and students in sex education?

1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.

This study will give correct and factual information and understanding of students towards the teaching of sex education. It will enlighten our students and prevent them from developing a sense of guilt, horror, disgust or fear of sex especially when they perform sex act of the right time for right purpose and with the right person. It will enable students to develop self-respect and self-control with due consideration. Developmental tasks of becoming responsible men and women in future.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY.

This study focuses on the perception of secondary school students on sex education.

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